# THE ARYAN PATH

**Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.**
*—The Voice of the Silence*

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## THE MYSTERY OF PAIN AND EVIL

[**Hamilton Fyfe** is well known for his broad humanitarian sympathies not only for his fellow men but for the animal kingdom as well. In this article he discusses a very important problem in a mystical way. We draw our readers' attention to the note which follows.—ED.]

Whether there are more pain and evil in the human world than there were in other ages, or whether they seem to be more because we know more about them, is hard to decide. In every age since Man's history began to be recorded, pain and evil have been the most prominent topics in the human chronicle. So much so that Gibbon was impelled to call history a record of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind; the usually pious Dr. Johnson goaded into asking "why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think merely to be wretched, and to pass his time from youth to age in fearing or in suffering calamities"; and H. G. Wells driven to the conclusion that humiliation and unhappiness have been the lot of the vast majority of mankind since organised society dawned on the world." Imaginative literature offers like testimony. Poets, dramatists, novelists exhibit humanity suffering pain, plotting or enduring evil. All religions start from the assumption that Man is by nature corrupt, his portion here "brief sorrow, short-lived care."

No doubt there is in all this some exaggeration. Most people get through life without calling it a curse rather than a boon. Few are positively happy, but small also is the proportion of the really miserable. The truth remains, however, that pain and evil are and always have been the dominant features of human existence and that no poet, no writer of prose, no historian, no philosopher, has ever explained why. Nor has any religion suggested a solution that could find acceptance for more than a short time. In the West there was an Age of Faith, when it was believed that God used pain and temptation to evil-doing as tests of

character. In the East, an idea of rival deities, one good, the other malevolent, held the ground for a while. Now the endeavour to account for pain and evil has been dropped by most religious bodies; poets and philosophers have also given it up.

Are we then to consider the problem insoluble ? There is no excuse for doing that. If we pursue truth with a single mind, not being afraid of any conclusion to which our pursuit may lead us, we might at any moment stumble on what we hope to discover. We must clear our minds of all the wisps of fog produced by careless or deliberately insincere teaching. We must take nothing on trust, admit no arbiter save reason. We must start from the beginning which, it seems to me, was the separation of Man from the other animals when Man became self-conscious and developed intellect.

In Man's self-consciousness, in his ability to stand outside himself, to review his actions and impulses, to say " I am I, " lies the sole difference between the human species and the rest. In other respects we have everything in common with animals. They can think, remember, to a certain extent reason ; they can love and hate. But they do not reflect or speculate ; their thoughts are always, as Spengler put it ( *Decline of the West* ) " directed to practical ends. " Their understanding cannot be " detached from sensation " ( Spengler again ).

Animals live in accordance with Nature. They feel no urge to do otherwise. Man is, as Ray Lankester called him, Nature's rebel son. His intellect wars with his instincts ; it impels him to defy and defeat Nature. Thus, while animals have lived in the same way for millions of years, Man constantly alters his environment. With what he styles " advancing civilisation " his existence becomes more and more artificial, more unnatural. This increases and intensifies pain and evil.

Among animals in a natural state there is no evil. They cannot break moral laws ; they have no moral sense. No animal can be wicked, for wickedness implies self-conscious choice between right and wrong. No animal feels the itch to dominate, or the desire to heap up riches, or the crazy affection for offspring which seeks to spare them from standing on their own feet and making their own way in the world. Animals will fight among themselves for food, or for a mate, or to safeguard a habitation and family, but they are never mean, servile, greedy or cruel. Many species are compelled by Nature to live by killing and eating other species, but the killing is done swiftly and as a rule unexpectedly. Animals never torture or kill for fun ( the notion that cats do has long been exploded ), or to bolster up tyrannies, or on the pretext of scientific research.

They feel pain, but in nothing like the same degree as human beings. That is because they have no imagination. They do not pity themselves. They do not fear

death or the possibility of another existence after death. They do not torment themselves by anxiety as to what will happen to their families or their fortunes after they are gone. They do not brood over the past or peer with painful misgiving into the future.

They do not sweat and whine about their condition.

They do not lie awake in the night and weep for their sins.

All who have studied animals sympathetically share Walt Whitman's respect for them. Most naturalists would say with Buffon "The more I see of men, the more I like animals." W. H. Hudson had always present to his mind "the power, grace and beauty of wild animals, their perfect harmony with Nature." Their lives are like music composed of simple chords, forming part of a great symphony, performed in obedience to the beat of a hidden conductor. The lives of human beings are full of discords. There is no "motive" running through them. A human being can be a dozen different persons at different times. An animal is always the same; its course is mapped out for it. No doubts or fears make it hesitate to do what it feels prompted to do. Nor is that prompting ever towards what would be alien to its nature (unnatural).

An animal lives on one plane, Man on many planes. He is, in Emerson's phrase, "disunited within himself." What his instincts prompt him to do is at variance with rules of conduct which he has been taught to consider binding. He is pulled in opposite directions. He professes to accept an ideal code of behaviour, but follows another "practical" code. He is for ever seeking more pleasure, more stimulation of sense and appetite than can be found in living as Nature (so far as we can judge) intended. The more civilised he is, the more acute his self-consciousness, the farther he departs from Nature. The result is more evil, more pain, until these become unbearable. All civilisations have committed suicide; they have perished amid fire and slaughter, the consequence of stumbling and staggering into war (as Lloyd George said Europe did in 1914), which caused destruction so vast as to be irreparable.

War was until recently regarded as unavoidable. Man was born to evil; wars were part of his heritage. At one time plague, pestilence and famine were so regarded—until it became clear that they could be prevented by cleanliness and care and improved methods of cultivation. At last an effort was made to persuade people that war was also preventible, that it was caused by the folly and ambition of rulers, taking advantage of the sheeplike willingness of mankind to be led; or by the rivalry of industrial and commercial tycoons. This cut across the teaching of religions and of most philosophies (that of Kant, for instance), which professed to see in war a wholesome discipline, a desirable antidote to the

comfortable security which made nations "soft." The effort failed—for the reason that scarcely any of the chief governing persons in the world gave it genuine support. They were not interested in making life more "natural and rational" in Matthew Arnold's phrase. They could not stretch their mental gaze beyond the trivialities of the hour. This brought upon their dupes and victims calamity worse than before.

Nothing of this sort has ever befallen any other species of animal. Some have died out because they were unable to adapt themselves to altered conditions and circumstances. None has ever destroyed itself by its own fatuity, as all human civilisations have done. In this and other defects of human nature we find the explanation of the unjustly harsh opinions of the human race formed by many of its finest minds, which have agreed with the religions in pronouncing it evil. Wordsworth, for example, in his lines addressed to a child wrote apprehensively

> I think of thee with many fears,
> For what may be thy lot in future years.

Arnold in *The Scholar-Gipsy* told how occupants of "intellectual thrones"

> All their sad experience
> Laid bare of wretched days.

Pascal thought of his fellow-creatures as *ces pauvres enfants*. Swift saw them as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the earth." To Byron, Man appeared as a "two-legged reptile, crafty and venomous"; to Maeterlinck as "of all creatures the most limited and incomplete," to Galsworthy as "the one fool." Burton in the *Anatomy of Melancholy* gave utterance to the view that must be taken by all who have thought about human life when he wrote: "Men have many enemies such as lions, wolves, serpents, but his worst enemy is his own species, since no fiend could torment, tyrannize and vex as one man doth another."

Since Man is in this respect entirely different from all other species and since the results are so painful to him, productive of so much evil, we are impelled to say "Nature cannot have intended this." Yet how could self-consciousness, the root of almost all the pain and evil that afflict mankind, have been acquired by the human race if Nature did not confer it in the usual way by means of evolution? Against belief that it was so conferred stand two main difficulties. One is that, while the results of evolution are shared out equally all round, intellect, the outcome of self-consciousness, is developed in a very small proportion of men and women. "The forces that move the world," one of the profoundest thinkers of our time, Sir Richard Livingstone, has written, "are not intellectual; all the great events in history bear out that truth." Professor Grierson goes further; he asserts that four-fifths of mankind "do not want to think for

themselves and are indeed incapable of doing so."

The second difficulty is that evolutionary changes serve some useful purpose, " give rise to progressive improvement " ( Haeckel ), whereas intellect cannot be shown to have done so. It has given Man ability to defeat Nature and endowed him with almost magical skill in handling material problems; but it has not made him happier or healthier, or supplied him with any key to the riddle of existence. Is it then possible that self-consciousness was caused by an accident—some such accident as the fall of a heavy branch from a tree on the head of one of our ape ancestors, or a blow from a club or a stone, which altered the convolutions of the brain slightly, but enough to bring self-consciousness into play ? One ape affected in this way could communicate to others the discovery "I am I." That is how human children are made self-conscious.

This, however, is a surmise by the way. We have not yet solved the mystery of Man's self-consciousness and intellect; it may be we never shall. But we know it is the only barrier separating us from animals and, if they have less pain and no evil in their lives, we are justified, it seems to me, in attributing these misfortunes to our self-consciousness, to the weakening of instinct, to the wayward and frequently harmful working of intellect. There was, I submit, a Fall of Man, not such as the myths of religion suggest, but from a natural, rational state to one which has been productive mainly of pain and evil ever since we have any record of human activities.

HAMILTON FYFE

## A NOTE ON THE ABOVE

Mr. Hamilton Fyfe closes the above article with a submission that the Fall of Man is a natural phenomenon and not merely a mythological speculation. It is intimately related to the birth of self- or reflective consciousness, with the power to compare and contrast and so choose, which implies freedom to determine. Here is the source of evil and pain. This view suggested by Mr. Fyfe is in full agreement with the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky on the martyrdom of self-conscious existence.

The Birth of Self-consciousness as a stage in human evolution is, however, very differently explained in the Esoteric Philosophy. Before that stage was reached man was man in form but not in mind; he was the mindless man. "Living Fire" was needed, that fire which gives the human mind its self-perception and self-consciousness. This was provided by others, *i. e.*, by intelligences who had gone all through this process ages upon ages ago in prior fields of evolution in other worlds; coming from other evolu-

tionary periods they lighted up the germ of animal-mind in the mindless man. Explains H. P. Blavatsky:—

There is no potentiality for creation, or self-Consciousness, in a *pure* Spirit on this our plane, unless its too homogeneous, perfect, because divine, nature is, so to say, mixed with, and strengthened by, an essence already differentiated.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 80.

No Entity, whether angelic or human, can reach the state of Nirvana, or of absolute purity, except through æons of suffering and the *knowledge* of EVIL as well as of good, as otherwise the latter remains incomprehensible.

Between man and the animal there is the impassable abyss of Mentality and Self-consciousness. What is human mind in its higher aspect, whence comes it, if it is not a portion of the essence—and, in some rare cases of incarnation, the *very essence*—of a higher Being: one from a higher and divine plane? Can man—a god in the animal form—be the product of Material Nature by evolution alone, even as is the animal, which differs from man in external shape, but by no means in the materials of its physical fabric, and is informed by the same, though undeveloped, Monad—seeing that the intellectual potentialities of the two differ as the Sun does from the Glow-worm? And what is it that creates such difference, unless man is an animal *plus* a *living god* within his physical shell?...

The mystery attached to the highly spiritual ancestors of the *divine* man within the earthly man is very great. His dual creation is hinted at in the Purânas, though its esoteric meaning can be approached only by collating together the many varying accounts, and reading them in their symbolical and allegorical character.—*Ibid.*, II. 81

In numerous ways, using different old-world texts, H. P. B. tries to clarify the confusion which exists in the modern mind coloured by the Darwinian theory of evolution, true in parts but very incomplete. In this teaching about the birth of self-consciousness lies buried the mystery of the missing link of modern science between the animal and the human kingdoms. In the hope that some reflecting minds, like those of Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, which are ready to consider dispassionately ideas however strange and out of the common and evaluate them, we print below a few more extracts, which explain this teaching, founded upon the theme of the famous drama of Æschylus, *Prometheus Bound*:—

The true theosophist, the pursuer of divine wisdom and worshipper of ABSOLUTE perfection...will prove that there never was an *original* sin, but only an abuse of physical intelligence—the psychic being guided by the animal, and both putting out the light of the spiritual. He will say, "All ye who can read between the lines, study ancient wisdom in the old dramas—the Indian and the Greek; read carefully the one just mentioned, one enacted on the theatres of Athens 2,400 years ago, namely 'Prometheus Bound.'" The myth belongs to neither Hesiod nor Æschylus; but, as Bunsen says, it "is older than the Hellenes themselves," for it belongs, in truth, to the dawn of human consciousness. The Crucified Titan is the personified

symbol of the collective Logos, the "Host," and of the "Lords of Wisdom" or the HEAVENLY MAN, who incarnated in Humanity. Moreover, as his name *Pro*-me-*theus*, meaning "he who sees before him" or futurity, shows—in the arts he devised and taught to humanity, psychological insight was not the least. For as he complains to the daughters of Oceanos:—

"Of prophecies the various modes I fixed,
And among dreams did first discriminate
The truthful vision...and mortals guided
To a mysterious art.....
All arts to mortals from Prometheus came..."

—*Ibid.*, II. 413

The subject of Æschylus' drama (the trilogy is lost) is known to all cultured readers. The demi-god robs the gods of their secret—the mystery of the *creative fire*. For this sacrilegious attempt he is struck down by KRONOS and delivered unto Zeus, the FATHER and creator of a mankind which he would wish to have blind intellectually, and animal-like; a *personal* deity, which will not see MAN "like one of us." Hence Prometheus, "the fire and light-giver," is chained on Mount Caucasus and condemned to suffer torture. But the triform Fates, whose decrees, as the Titan says, even Zeus: "E'en he the fore-ordained cannot escape..."—ordain that those sufferings will last only to that day when a son of Zeus—"Ay, a son bearing stronger than his sire" (787) "One of thine (Io's) own descendants it must be..." (791)—is born. This "Son" will deliver Prometheus (the suffering Humanity) from his own fatal gift. His name is, "He who has to come...." —*Ibid.*, II. 414

The intellectual evolution, in its progress hand-in-hand with the physical, has certainly been a curse instead of a blessing—a gift quickened by the "Lords of Wisdom," who have poured on the human *manas* the fresh dew of their own spirit and essence. The divine Titan has then suffered in vain; and one feels inclined to regret his benefaction to mankind, and sigh for those days so graphically depicted by Æschylus, in his "Prometheus Bound," when, at the close of the first Titanic age, nascent, physical mankind, still mindless and (physiologically) senseless, is described as—

"Seeing, they saw in vain;
Hearing, they heard not; but
like shapes in dreams,
Through the long time all things
at random mixed."

Our *Saviours*, the Agnishwatta and other divine "Sons of the Flame of Wisdom" (personified by the Greeks in Prometheus), may well, in the injustice of the human heart, be left unrecognized and unthanked. They may, in our ignorance of the truth, be indirectly cursed for Pandora's gift: but to find themselves proclaimed and declared by the mouth of the clergy, the EVIL ONES, is too heavy a Karma for "Him" "who dared alone"—when Zeus "ardently desired" to quench the entire human race—to save "that mortal race" from perdition, or, as the suffering Titan is made to say:—

"From sinking blasted down to Hades' gloom.
For this by the dire tortures I am bent,
Grievous to suffer, piteous to behold,
I who did mortals pity!...."

The chorus remarking very pertinently :—

" Vast boon was this thou gavest unto mortals...."

Prometheus answers :—

" Yea, and besides 'twas I that gave them fire,

CHORUS: Have now these short-lived creatures flame-eyed fire ?

PROM: Ay, and by it full many arts will learn.... "

But, with the arts, the fire received has turned into the greatest curse: the animal element, and *consciousness* of its possession, has changed periodical instinct into chronic animalism and sensuality. It is this which hangs over humanity like a heavy funereal pall. Thus arises the responsibility of free-will; the Titanic passions which represent humanity in its darkest aspect; " the restless insatiability of the lower passions and desires, when, with self-asserting insolence, they bid defiance to the restraints of law. "

Prometheus having endowed man, according to Plato's " Protagoras, " with that " wisdom which ministers to physical well-being, " but the lower aspect of *manas* of the animal (*Kama*) having remained unchanged, instead of " an untainted mind, heaven's first gift " (Æschylus), there was created the eternal vulture of the ever unsatisfied desire, of regret and despair coupled with " the dreamlike feebleness that fetters the blind race of mortals " (p. 556), unto the day when Prometheus is released by his heaven-appointed deliverer, Herakles.

—*Ibid.*, II. 411-413

The modern Prometheus has now become *Epi-metheus*, " he who sees only after the event "; because the universal philanthropy of the former has long ago degenerated into selfishness and self-adoration. Man will rebecome the *free* Titan of old, but not before cyclic evolution has re-established the broken harmony between the two natures—the terrestrial and the divine; after which he becomes impermeable to the lower titanic forces, invulnerable in his personality, and immortal in his individuality, which cannot happen before every animal element is eliminated from his nature. When man understands that " *Deus non fecit mortem* " (*Sap.* I., 13), but that man has created it himself, he will re-become the Prometheus before his Fall.

—*Ibid.*, II. 422

# THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

[ **Shrimati M. A. Janaki, B. A., B. L., Advocate,** of Madras, discusses here a problem which concerns each law-abiding citizen no less than his erring brother. In every man who has not reached perfection, the potential criminal lurks. In modern penology the intrinsic worth of man *qua* man is often ignored. Sir Maurice Gwyer, then Chief Justice of India, stressed this point on the inauguration in 1940 of the Indian Penal Reform League, which we warmly welcomed but of which unfortunately we have heard nothing since. Sir Maurice emphasised that while the community had the right to protect itself against the criminal, the latter was one of its members, with rights of his own to protection. Society, he declared, would continue to make criminals as well as to punish them, until it accepted in full " the faith, often shaken but never shattered, in the common humanity of us all. "—ED. ]

In the early days, before society was organised on individualistic lines, all properties were in the common possession of the totem or the clan and all had the advantages and disadvantages of enjoying them. The idea of individual ownership was a later development, and along with it also developed the idea of punishing the person who hindered the growth and possession of private property. All the known collections of ancient law are characterised by a feature which broadly distinguishes them from systems of mature jurisprudence. It may be laid down that the more archaic the code, the fuller and more minute is its penal legislation. As long as the wife has no rights against her husband, the son against his father, the Law of Persons will be restricted to the scantiest limits. There are no corresponding reasons for the poverty of the Penal Law and accordingly, even if it be hazardous to pronounce that the childhood of nations is always a period of ungoverned violence, we shall still be able to understand why the modern relation of criminal law to civil should be inverted in the ancient codes.

Both the Christian and the non-Christian archaic law entails penal consequences on certain classes of acts and of omissions, as being violations of divine prescriptions and commands. The conception of offence against God produced the first class of ordinances ; the conception of offence against one's neighbour produced the second ; but the idea of offence against the State or the aggregate community did not at first produce a true criminal jurisprudence.

The State's justification for using force against free citizens has become a more acute problem than ever on account of the control of

the State by vested interests, and the abuse of the State's power by resort to frequent wars and to repression, and by the failure to prevent the exploitation of the many by the few. Democracy now wants to control and limit the right of the State to use force against its citizens by calling them criminals.

Enlightened modern opinion demands the reconstruction of the State in a form which will not be liable to control and exploitation by selfish individuals, vested interests, and irreconcilable party cliques. According to some who hold this view such a reconstruction could not be achieved by constitutional but only by revolutionary methods. They want to use crime as a weapon of war against the State in its present form and are advocating, on philosophical, ethical and scientific grounds, the most violent forms of crime against the government, such as anarchist outrages, nihilist assassinations, syndicalist sabotage and armed insurrection. Crime thus becomes exalted and blessed, the refuge of the morally enlightened instead of the morally debased. The right of the State to oppose such revolutionary crime is now on trial.

There is a steady growth in the number of criminals due to economic depression and unemployment, irreconcilable political warfare, social dislocation, growth of population, wars and so on. There is also a growth in the number and variety of crimes due to the increasing complexity of modern life. Modern traffic, electricity, radio, cinema and aeroplanes have all given rise to new offences.

All men are selfish in different degrees and work for self-gratification and exploit others for that end. Many moralists maintain that successful careerists, business men and politicians are, with few exceptions, unpunished criminals. If a man is by nature wicked, crime would be merely the assertion of this original nature and the loss of the acquired quality of goodness. Revolutionary thought brands the cry against crime as the cry of exploiters and vested interests against the threat of danger to their exploitation and ill-gotten gains. Socialism considers that property is the result of theft and hence its re-theft by the needy would be a blessing. Sociologists like Durheem find positive merit in crime in that it keeps society alert and active, and indicates the need for and direction of reform.

Crime is an act or an omission which the State punishes as being in its opinion antisocial. The dogmatic fervour with which people are apt to be unthinkingly and unfeelingly crying for the punishment of criminals would be justified only if the State's opinion holding any particular thing as antisocial were infallible, immutable, universal and eternal truth. But history proves that such opinion varies from age to age, country to country and people to people.

As crime is relative to changing opinions and circumstances there can

be no such thing as a fixed objective criminal type. No man and no act could ever be branded as being always and wholly antisocial. A fixed subjective criminal type also is psychologically impossible. There are no such things as fixed criminal instincts, criminal faculties or criminal emotions. Even an atavist becomes a criminal only if circumstances favour. The idea of a criminal class is itself fallacious.

Murderers, robbers, heretics, sex offenders, swindlers, as well as those who drive a cart on the wrong side of the street, use false measures, build without licenses or commit nuisances are all criminals; such a heterogeneous group can never constitute a social class. The same must apply to the idea of a criminal tribe. The primitive form of a nation, consisting of countless types of individuals, is called a tribe. No nation, race, tribe, or country should properly be conceived to be wholly or predominantly criminal.

In modern criminology the subjective view of crime receives greater attention than the objective view. It holds that the criminal and his motives are far more important than the acts and the results of crime, although it is the crime that makes the criminal, and not the criminal the crime. If the latter were true, there would exist a congenital criminal and crime would merely be his activity. The subjective view implies impersonality and punishment based on injury done.

Since punishment can deter the evil-doer only to the extent to which he can master his motives, psychology and environment, and to which these have made him their victim in producing crime, it is necessary to devise methods other than punishment for preventing crime.

Both these problems—of criminal responsibility and of treatment of the criminal—require a study of the psychology of the individual criminal, of the working in him of all these motives and of his environment. An abstract and even an objective study of crime, although necessary,will not form the dominant subject of criminology. Personality is now recognised as lying at the core of criminality. According to this new view the treatment must be not for the crime but for the criminal. It will have to be individualised and follow the methods of discipline advocated by the new education.

The aims of legal punishment are four : Protective, *i. e.*, protection of the State and of society from the activities of the criminal; retributive, *i. e.*, revenge for the injury done; deterrent or preventive, *i. e.*, to discourage the criminal from repeating the crime and the public from resorting to it; and reformatory, *i. e.*, to reform the criminal. As a general rule there is nothing in the character of an act or an omission which enables us to determine whether it is a criminal offence and the only test is the nature of the liability which it entails. Many acts which were formerly criminal offences are no longer punish-

able as such, and especially within the last few years an enormous number of acts which formerly were not criminal have become criminal offences. Again, since by-laws, "enforceable as part of the law of the land" vary greatly in different districts, an act which is innocent in one place may, at a distance of a few yards, amount to a criminal offence, like the offences against local regulations governing the rationing of foodstuffs.

Although, however, neither the moral character of an act nor its mischief may enable us to determine whether it is a crime or not, yet these considerations always have been factors of importance in causing an act to be made punishable. Thus certain offences not previously in the criminal category may become punishable because general attention has been called to the public danger which they involve.

The intensified struggle for existence and the fear of economic failure have altered standards of conduct which used to obtain in the business and professional classes. The most outstanding characteristic of crime in the modern world is the alarming increase in high-grade fraud. Nothing is more significant in our modern world than the development of the kind of criminal who has intelligence, resources, and often training and ability for a legitimate occupation. He feels forced to turn to crime because of the uncertainty of lawful occupations or inability to secure the work for which he is fitted, when he needs it. Another class of men combine a criminal career with a legitimate occupation; and the real motive is to supplement an inadequate income, to make provision for an uncertain future.

From a close study of all the various writers on the influence of environment in criminology, we may group them under these heads: There is first the economic, secondly the psychological, and thirdly the anthropological. With all its limitations, the first view has by far the strongest position, because of the precision with which it can be expressed. Next in importance is the psychological conception of environment. The significance of Tarde's notions, however rudimentary they may be concerning imitation, can hardly be exaggerated, if we admit —and we have to—that imitation is a factor independent of economics, influenced by it though it undoubtedly is. This might roughly be described as the co-operative factor in environment, since the relation between the urge to do the same thing and actual co-operation in the act is obvious. Another striking aspect of Tarde's theory is that it originated ideas concerning the social aspects of the herd instinct which social psychologists have developed.

According to the social anthropological school, environment becomes the battle ground of individual animals seeking, in the last analysis, their own survival. The essence of association is the association for struggle. This view has been modified

by the modern anthropologists. The anthropologists did emphasise the bearing of *physical* environment upon individuals as an illustration of man's reaction to, and struggle with, natural forces. The environmentalists are all agreed that environment, and nothing else, determines individual behaviour.

These three basic factors, economics, psychology and anthropology, are in fact all contributory to every social environment. But a mere change in the economic structure of society, however salutary, would not result in the elimination of crime. This is the final inference which concludes the discussion of the environmental theory. Most of the environmentalists expressed or implied the conviction that social changes could be of a type which would totally eliminate crime. This would be reasonable if, as they believed, environmental and economic mechanism were the same thing, and the individual merely formed a part of that mechanism. This is not the case.

There are various theories of punishment according to the modern researches in the various departments. The criminal anthropologists did not believe in the utility of punishment. They merely insisted on it as a necessity. The criminal of today may be applauded as the hero of tomorrow, and the martyr of one cause will be considered as a renegade by its opponents. The most commonly accepted opinion at the present day is that the function of punishment is to deter. It is not considered easy to eliminate the criminal from society, leaving aside the ethical aspect of the case. The majority agree that penology ought to aim at the reform of the criminal and his transformation into a useful member of society.

Just as the criminal does not understand the nature and quality of his act, so also the penologist has no clear notion of the real motives which cause him to advocate criminal punishment. The Mosaic idea of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth survives to the present day in capital punishment and to some extent in the standardised periods of detention which apply to numerous crimes. Now they have discovered that extreme severity of the law defeated its own purpose since juries refused to convict and aggrieved persons to prosecute. From this we must infer that in penology, as in the other branches of criminology, the nature of the social system determines the ideas concerning crime and punishment.

On the evidence gathered from the observation of criminals, the operation of the law, and social environment, the criminologist comes to the conclusion that severe penal methods do not have a deterrent effect. There is need for a synthesis of the legalistic and criminological points of view. Both individual and society contribute to the criminal act. It is justifiable and necessary to put some restraint upon the individual, but at the same time the character of

society also must be modified. Social reform must go hand in hand with individual restraint and reformation in that it fits in with the penological method which can be readily applied in practice.

A study of modern research shows that the trend is more and more towards the ancient modes of living. Hindu culture has combined the social and individual life of man in the word "Dharma" and everything that man did, in private as in public life, had to conform to certain rules. The same idea is put into practice in Russia at the present day in the Communist system.

M. A. JANAKI

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# THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

A plea for the clarification of the aims of education is made by I. N. Kandel, Editor of the *Educational Yearbook* of Teachers' College, New York City, in an article prepared for the U. S. Office of War Information. The equality of opportunity which he lays down as a basic provision has far-reaching connotations, including the abolition of one educational system for the masses and another for a privileged group. Parity of conditions also implies health care and adaptation of instruction to individual abilities and aptitudes, instead of to the parent's purse. Adequate salaries for teachers and equality of pay for like equipment and responsibilities regardless of the age of children taught is another fundamental principle which India especially should heed.

On the vexed question of religious education in the schools Mr. Kandel takes a sound stand, deploring the confusion of religious education with sectarian, denominational instruction. Stress, he rightly insists, should be not on differences of creed but "on the brotherhood of man and on the ideals common to all the great religions of the world."

And curricula, he insists, should imperatively be directed to impressing upon youthful minds the cultural interdependence of all men throughout the world. Not by the addition of courses, but by the permeation of all subjects by that theme. It needs no argument that

> the cost of one week's expenditure for war purposes would not be too much to devote to education as the price of security and peace.

# BUDDHISM IN MODERN EUROPE

## RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

[If Buddhism has a special message for the modern world—and we agree with **Mr. Christmas Humphreys** that it has—it is because of all the world religions it has departed least from the original doctrines of Gautama, the great Teacher of mankind whose honoured name it bears. Those doctrines were none of his invention, only a partial statement of what had long been taught in Hindu esotericism, the most important feature perhaps of his reforms having consisted in opening to all, the possibilities of spiritual attainment that had so long been kept as the prerogative of the few. The Orientalists have erred in concentrating on the Buddhism of the Southern Church as adhering more closely to the original teachings. If the Buddhism of Ceylon and Burma and Siam is faithful to the Buddha's teachings in one aspect, the Northern Buddhism of Tibet, China and Nepal is the outcome of another aspect. As time passes, however, one fact emerges above all differences of interpretation: the growing recognition and appreciation of Buddha's influence as that of a truly Enlightened One. In a recent issue of *Indian Art and Letters* Phirozshah D. Mehta in an article on Sanchi, that triumph of ancient Buddhist art, pays tribute to the "first true democrat of our race."

Few figures influenced world history as did the Buddha.... A moral and spiritual giant endowed with the true spirit of scientific enquiry, he ushered in a new era, by the power of his personal example and the profundity of his teachings, in religion and philosophy, in politics and social organisation, in education and in art. —ED.]

Buddhism first became known to the West in modern times by the translation of the Pali Canon. The work of Professor Max Müller in the Sacred Books of the East and of Professor and Mrs. Rhys Davids in the Pali Text Society, together with *The Light of Asia*, and a number of works describing Buddhism as lived in Buddhist countries, all combined to make known the traditional teachings of the Buddha, but until 1908 no organised attempt was made to test by living them the truth of the principles involved. In this year Allan Bennett, an Englishman who took the Buddhist name of Ananda Metteya on entering the Burmese Sangha, arrived in London as the leader of a missionary effort for which the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland had been founded to prepare the way. This Society, and its organ, *The Buddhist Review*, worked until 1921, when, its initial impetus being exhausted, it ceased to function. Ananda Metteya died in 1923 soon after publishing his greatest work, *The Wisdom of the Aryas*.

In 1924, the Buddhist Lodge was formed as a Lodge of the Adyar

Theosophical Society, "to form a nucleus of such persons as are prepared to study, disseminate and attempt to live the fundamental principles of Buddhism." A year later the Anagarika Dharmapala, as he then was, arrived on a mission from Ceylon, and the Lodge did everything possible to make his mission a success. But though he founded a British Branch of the Maha Bodhi Society of Calcutta his health soon after compelled him to return to Ceylon, and the Mission was deprived thereafter of any permanent effective leadership. In 1926, the Lodge, being dissatisfied with the newly added teachings of the Theosophical Society, seceded as a body, and became the Buddhist Lodge, London, changing that title in 1943 to the Buddhist Society, London, and its magazine from *Buddhism in England* to *The Middle Way*. From 1925 until the outbreak of this war the Mission and the Lodge worked side by side as the only two Buddhist groups in England.

At the time of the foundation of these two societies Buddhism meant Hinayana Buddhism, the teaching of the Southern School, and a somewhat rigid and purely ethical version, dogmatic in its application, of those teachings. There was little or no philosophy, and compassion, save as the reason for not wearing a fur overcoat, was hardly mentioned. All this was changed in 1928, when the Venerable Tai Hsu of China came to London, and in the course of a brief visit sowed the seeds of the Mahayana, the teaching of the Northern School. About the same time Professor Suzuki began the publication of his famous *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, thus providing the West with an aspect of truth which is hardly found elsewhere in the field of religion and philosophy.

With all this material available for study, it is interesting to see how England, Germany and France made use of it. Dr. Dahlke, the leading figure in German Buddhism, which was rich from the first in translated Scriptures, founded his *Buddhistisches Haus* at Frohnau, near Berlin, as a Vihara or retreat for study and meditation. Miss Lounsbery, an American woman living in Paris, who founded *Les Amis du Bouddhisme* in 1928 at the invitation of the Venerable Tai Hsu, began by interesting professors from the Universities and Museums, and men of position in similar walks of life. In England, the movement was and still is of the middle class, and tends but little to the monastic life or to the University lecture room. Our aim has rather been to obey the Blessed One's behest: "Go ye forth, O Bhikkhus, for the profit of the many, for the bliss of the many, for the welfare of mankind. Proclaim the doctrine glorious."

Yet the practical difficulties in a country where millions of pounds are always available to advertise a new drink or drug, but few to make known the immemorial wisdom of mankind, are and always will be

enormous. Where the cost of advertising a meeting or a book is almost prohibitive, all propaganda, in the sense of a making known of Buddhist principles, must be confined to that slow seepage of information which small meetings and a steady trickle of printed information can supply. Yet Buddhists, unlike those of other faiths, have little use for meetings. "Work out your own salvation, with diligence" said the Buddha, and this is an individual business. Meetings, therefore, have never been largely attended, but our literature, from leaflets to the 350 pages of our *Concentration and Meditation,* have sold by the thousand, though published without advertisement or backing of any kind.

The public, therefore, wants this information, or they would not buy it as fast as it appears, and it would be interesting, though obviously impossible, to find out how much of the increasing knowledge of the fundamentals of the Ancient Wisdom is due to the efforts of the various Theosophical Societies, and how much to the efforts of the Buddhist groups, our own included, which have been working to that end. Certainly the knowledge has spread through all classes of society, and there are few educated people who have not at least heard of the doctrine of rebirth, and in some vague way of Karma.

For if it be asked what aspects of the Dhamma seem to interest an average audience most, the answer is unquestionably Karma and Rebirth, whether the audience be of factory workers or the philosophic group of a West End club. The unity of life is a theory known to them, the omnipresence of suffering is often unpalatable, the doctrine of the changing soul has little attraction for those who, if they still believed in an immortal soul, would probably not come to the lecture. But Karma and Rebirth stir the imagination, and a recent addition to John Murray's "Wisdom of the East" Series on this subject has been widely sold.

The types attending lectures, for we cannot speak as to those which buy the books, are as varied as the questions asked, and in the Society tend to filter out, as it were, into the inevitable pairs of opposites in the human character. The Arhat and the Bodhisattva type quite soon appear, the former the Roundhead of our English history, preferring the Hinayana's emphasis on ethics, and the latter concentrating on the service and the saving of mankind. As the Society has never attached itself to any one School, this difference of potential serves to provide a balanced membership. Politics of every description have been from the outset banned in the Society, though members may of course pursue and advocate what form of government they please. Our own internal government has always been completely democratic, all matters of importance being discussed and decided at open meetings of the Society, sometimes in the presence of strangers attending for the first time, no doubt to their mild astonishment.

As a matter of policy we have consistently set our face against giving lectures at our own headquarters, whether for members only or for the public. In our experience there is such a thing as the lecture temperament, and we refuse to flatter it. There are those who, refusing to study for themselves, attend with painful regularity the lectures offered them, taking nothing to the meeting, doing no work at it and therefore taking nothing away. Instead, we insist on every person present taking part in the common task, be it a discussion or the study of a book. In the former, a complete stranger's comment may be invited; in the latter, all read in turn, and we have had at a meeting nine nationalities, ranging in terms of social standing from a Duchess to a pavement artist who, as it happened, were sitting side by side.

The Buddhist Mission, the London branch of the Maha Bodhi Society, concentrated on Sunday evening public lectures, as against the Buddhist Society's weekday study classes, and thus, each with our own meditation classes and special study groups, we covered the ground.

At the outbreak of war, most of the Sinhalese members of the Mission returned to Ceylon, and the Mission soon closed down. The members of the Buddhist Society followed their individual sense of duty, as in the last war. Some went into the Forces, and have distinguished themselves on the field of action; others declared themselves non-combatant, and have suffered for their opinions; others again took a middle course, and applied for positions where they were helping "the war effort," but without themselves being involved in violence. Meetings of the Society were suspended for the six months of the 1940-41 "blitz," as it was unreasonable to gather people in an upstairs room or to expect them to go home at the height of an all-night raid. But as soon as meetings were resumed our membership increased, and enquiries for literature exceeded the possible supply. In the changed circumstances it was inevitable that a proportion of new members should be suffering from a mild form of neurosis, those who, unable to face life in its current difficulty, were seeking here and there for the means of buttressing their own inadequate strength. A religious society can always handle and help a certain proportion of such "patients," but, if the ratio becomes too high, the virility and value of the movement suffer accordingly. In our own case it is the healthiest minds that are away at the wars in one capacity or another. The remainder of us can only "carry on."

In the Summer of 1943 we moved to our present premises near the British Museum and London University. Here we have housed our Shrine, Library and Art Collection, and regular meetings are held for the public and for members only. Meanwhile *The Middle Way*, edited by Miss Clare Cameron, one of the few magazines of its kind in Europe

to have survived the war, is limited in size and circulation only by the paper shortage, and our post-war plans include a determined attempt to obtain for it wider publicity. Never before has the level of literature on our public book-stalls fallen so low, and we are convinced that magazines like THE ARYAN PATH and *The Middle Way* would provide a long-felt want for the reading public if only they knew of them.

The future of Buddhism in the West is a matter of prophecy. Miss Lounsbery and her group in Paris have splendidly survived the occupation and are already playing their part in the reconstruction of the spiritual life of France. Of the *Buddhistisches Haus* at Frohnau we as yet know nothing, nor of a group believed to be working in Sweden. Our own plans are at least clear-cut, and do not fail for want of humility. We have no illusions about converting the West to Buddhism, nor would we ever lend ourselves to the attempt. No civilization, however sick, can be saved by assuming the worn and second-hand garments of an alien religion, for life moves on, and new forms must be built to express the expanding life. But we do feel that we have a duty to perform in making known the Wisdom of the All-Enlightened One, in order that individuals whose *dharma* it is to approach the Truth by the Buddha's Middle Way may know of its existence. Moreover, in the mass mind of the Western peoples, as well as in those of its leaders, there must be sown, we believe, the seeds of Buddhist principles, so that, whatever the form they assume or the name they bear, they may be incorporated in the religion or philosophy by which the West will achieve, if at all, its own salvation.

To this end we have published in *The Middle Way* "Twelve Principles of Buddhism," first, to present a consensus of the teachings of the various schools of Buddhism in compendious form, as a stimulus to further study; and secondly, to provide a tentative "Norm" of Buddhism from which all members of the Society writing or lecturing on its behalf should not too seriously diverge. These principles, in leaflet form, will be the basis of our propaganda, and various groups in the Society will expand them one by one into pamphlet form. It seems that two of the most fruitful forms of future study will be the comparison of Buddhism and modern psychology, and of Buddhism and Christianity, the former because each has so much to offer the other, the latter because the time is ripe for a deep comparative study of these twin religions of our lives, our native faith and our acquired beliefs and principles. After all, Christianity is the religion of the West, however little it has been recently applied, and there must be millions who would prefer their own religion to be made more vital, more immediate and more reasonable than to abandon it in favour of another. And so long as the Truth is rediscovered, what

matters it by which road the summit is attained ?

Looking further ahead, we have plans for a visit to this country of a Chinese master of Zen, for there is in Zen an element of " sweet unreasonableness, " of an impish, non-intellectual, earthy common-sense which marches well with our English character and it may be that East and West will happily meet on its eternal principles.

In all these plans we shall co-operate with our Continental colleagues, and with the various groups in the United States which have yet to be knit into a correlated movement. In England the Press, swift to become aware of a movement about to be " news " in its activities, are suddenly aware of us. Although, therefore, we can never do more than provide a few foundation-stones for the future temple of peace, we shall, if we do no less, have justified our labours in the service of the All-Enlightened One.

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS

## INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

A United Nations Conference is scheduled to meet in London on November 1st to draw up a constitution for the new educational and cultural organisation of the United Nations. It is reassuring to note that " the development and maintenance of mutual understanding and appreciation of the culture of the peoples of the world " and " international co-operation in extending and making available to all the world's full body of knowledge and culture " are prominent among the aims proposed. Among the functions of the organisation contemplated is the facilitating of mutual consultation among educational and cultural leaders " of the peace-loving nations. " There must be no hard-and-fast division between the nations that describe themselves as " peace-loving " and the rest of the world—especially in the spreading of the mutual appreciation that is the formula *par excellence* for peace. " They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. " The United Nations cannot unblushingly claim " wholeness, " but they must stand the readier therefore to share their proven remedies with those more obviously ill.

# THE BOOK TRADE IN INDIA

## THE NEED FOR REORGANISATION

[ **Shri Madan Gopal,** a rising young Indian essayist and journalist and the biographer of the late great Hindi novelist, Shri Premchand, writes here of the handicaps and the needless confusion in spite of which the Indian book trade is pressing forward. The handicaps are not insurmountable and the confusion is resolvable, given the spirit of collaboration, and if some far-seeing publisher or literary body takes the lead. Shri Gopal attempts here a diagnosis and suggests some steps to remedy conditions.

It is to be hoped that the First All-India Writers' Conference, which the P. E. N. is sponsoring at Jaipur from October 20th to 22nd, by strengthening the *esprit de corps* among our Indian writers, will bring about such mutual sympathy and understanding that they will prove infectious and the makers and sellers of books will be drawn into just and cordial relations with the country's writers. This will be to their mutual gain and to the benefit also of the reading public whom the present maladjustment and lack of co-ordination often deprives of access to and even of knowledge of the books they want.—ED. ]

World War Second has proved a blessing in disguise to the Indian book trade. It has hardly passed its pamphleteering stage. Nevertheless, faced as it was with the war-time shortage of printing paper —the Government took over 70 per cent. of the paper produced in India and imports fell to almost zero—and the very high cost of book production, its achievements are really commendable. For the purpose of this article, I will limit myself mostly to books published in English, which is the connecting link between the various provinces of India, but the arguments would apply to the Indian-language literatures with equal force.

With the dwindling of imports of foreign books and periodicals, as a result of lack of shipping space, the Indian reading public, accustomed to be fed upon foreign publications, found itself in a vacuum ; it was left without any reading material within easy access. The situation became particularly critical in the fall of 1942. In August of that year, the Congress leaders were incarcerated. A spontaneous outburst of pamphlets resulted, some of them published underground. Little tracts began to appear in ever-increasing numbers. Another phenomenon worthy of note was the publication of cheap and " sexy " literature, which found very good sales, particularly in ports and military stations. This type of literature deserves a check by the authorities, for the bulk of it is of a very unhealthy nature and few Governments would put up with this type of books in peace time.

India imported books and period-

icals worth crores of rupees before the war. Apart from the "examination books" publishers, there were only a few publishing houses in India which had made a name for themselves, *e.g.*, Kitabistan of Allahabad, Natesan of Madras, Thacker and Taraporevala of Bombay and Minerva of Lahore. For most of these concerns, publishing was only a secondary trade; their primary business was book-selling. For a vast country like India, their publications were too few. And fewer still among them attracted any attention; and if they ever did it was mostly at railway book-stalls when one would "buy anything" to while away a few hours.

In 1942, a few enterprising people saw the immense potentialities of the book trade in India. They established new publishing houses. The pioneer was the Padma Publications Limited, Bombay, which has to its credit many excellent publications. Kitab Mahal of Allahabad, Ashraf of Lahore and Hind Kitabs of Bombay also deserve mention. It will not be true to say that only business prospects attracted them to this line. Some of them have a genuine interest in encouraging good literature. Thacker & Co., Bombay, outdistanced them all in the matter of publications, in quality and in quantity. During the past year they have been producing nearly one book a day. Their rivals would point out that they had better facilities of printing and paper supplies.

The position today, at the end of the war, is this: The business opportunities in this trade have been realised, for most of the houses are making money; a band of new writers is coming up. Will the Indian public be allowed to switch back to foreign publications again? Or will our publishers accept the challenge and take the industry forward? And how can they encourage this trade? The war has taught them the importance of a national literature dealing with the problems that are peculiar to our country. A healthy nation can be brought up on a healthy literature; and we would not be telling a lie if we said that our leaders till lately neglected this aspect sadly.

It is a happy sign that some of the eminent Indian writers who till now had their books published abroad are seriously thinking of giving preference to Indian publishers over foreign though the latter can pay them better, advertise their wares better, and give better publicity to the authors who can thus reach a larger reading public—because we still "look West."

But the literature that is coming out is of a periodical nature. Tracts and pamphlets are the vehicles which are, generally speaking, employed by societies and institutions out to preach certain ideals. The time has now come when our publishers should seriously think of bringing out literature of a "soberer," more thought-provoking nature. A new generation is coming up, some of

whom will be people fresh from the forces with experiences which have not been put on paper by Indian writers yet. Many of them have been abroad and will be back with wider mental outlook and horizons, a generation that will shape tomorrow, the tomorrow of their vision. The writer belongs to the future; he lives in the future. We should know what his tomorrow is like. He must have a chance.

But besides being interested in letting the world know what he is thinking about, he expects recognition for his work, recognition not merely in the shape of appreciative reviews but also through the popularity his book gains. The writer wants to see his book in the largest possible number of hands. It should also bring him recognition in the shape of money. He wants the publishers to make money, but he also expects them to share it with him. Starvation may act as a goad to some writers, but not to all. It is our job to see that the writer does not waste all his energies in his battle for bread and butter. Today the payments are miserable. When the Indian writer hears of the fortunes made by writers like Wells and Shaw he cannot believe that those astronomical figures can be true. And for this we cannot blame the publishers only. Every bookseller would, in all sincerity, retort: "But the people don't buy the book; I cannot thrust it down their throats; the reading public is not large and it hardly cares to look into the contents of books published in India." While we may have other scores to settle with the bookseller as well as with the publisher, there he is right.

The Indian readers, as said, "look West." It is the job of the publishers and booksellers to make them interested in Indian publications. The Indian readers must be made to cultivate the habit of reading Indian books and of *buying* Indian publications.

The fault lies with our publishing and selling trade as a whole. The booksellers place the Indian publications in obscure corners of the shop. The publishers should insist on the booksellers displaying such books in the shop windows, till now reserved for foreign publications. Why? Some of the books are printed with type either out of date or worn out by use and by presses which cannot afford to go in for new types. But there are presses, the work done by which is excellent. Some of them are sufficiently well known, such as the Allahabad Law Journal Press, the Times of India Press, the Caxton Press, the Wagle Press and Civil and Military Gazette Press. There are some very good presses in Bangalore, Mangalore and Madras in South India and some others in Bengal. But their number must increase and there is no reason to believe that there is no room for improvement in the work done by them. The printing trade is fast progressing and we must keep abreast of all developments.

There is much room for improve-

ment in the design of dust-covers, as also in their printing. There is plenty of untapped artistic talent in the country; this should be utilised not only in the design of covers but also in illustrations and get-up. There remains much to be done in the selection of printing paper; much of the appearance and get-up of the book depends upon the selection of the right quality of paper. The present tendency, to take "any quality of paper provided it is economical," is almost suicidal. If the reader spends money he expects a good return for it, not in the matter of contents only but also in possessing a good attractive book.

We need a concerted all-round drive to popularise Indian books. So ill-organised are sales at the present moment that people in one part of India hardly know what appears in other parts. Few shops in Bombay would supply you with books published in Bengal or the Punjab. One comes to know of their publication through press reviews and can secure copies only through directly contacting the publishers or the author. Isn't it a thoroughly distressing state of affairs? And the position becomes more painful and ridiculous when we can easily get books published in the remotest parts of the world *outside India*.

Yes. We "look West."

And the West organises its sales of books very well. They advertise them well. The manager of the biggest publishing house in India told me once that *all the packages* of a particular book were sent back to them, after a number of months, *with the packing intact*, by one of the biggest railway book-stall agencies in India, one with nearly 300 branches, with the statement that the books did not sell well!

Publishers in the West release books simultaneously in various countries, where ground has already been prepared through advance publicity. Why cannot our publishers secure advance publicity?

The state of affairs is so scandalous today that there is not one society or institution in India which keeps a list of all that is published in all corners of India. We do not know what wealth of literature is produced in the provincial languages even through the English medium. Whether privately started or Government aided, an institution of that type is badly needed; it could periodically bring out a catalogue of all that is published in all parts of the country in any language. The task is not so herculean as it seems at first sight; for, according to the Act of 1867, no press in India can be maintained without the permission of the Government; and two copies of all that is published therein have to be sent to the Government. The institution for which a plea is made here can easily secure lists of presses from the Government departments and request all presses similarly to send them one or two copies of all that is printed by them. Their catalogue would be of immense help to libraries, which come to know of

the books through book reviews—sometimes in the foreign press!

Besides, the publishers themselves ought to bring out attractive catalogues of their publications with press opinions and a few remarks in regard to the contents of the books. Indeed there is no reason why they should not do advance advertisement in papers; this can even bring them advance orders from readers interested in the subject.

Periodical book exhibitions, an excellent start for which has been made in the Punjab, should be held, when prizes for get-up and artistic production of books and the outstanding books of the year should be given.

To popularise literature, an effort is needed to start some book clubs and societies to select outstanding books of the year which could be supplied to members at reduced rates. It is worth noting that the New Book Company started a venture like this in India, but not one book published in India was selected by them. These book societies stand excellent chances of success in the various provincial-language literatures, where we also need some experiments on the model of the Penguins.

Is it a long way to Tipperary? How long?

MADAN GOPAL

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# PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEMS

Prof. C. E. A. Winslow, an outstanding American authority on public health problems, examined in the April *Survey Graphic* the question of public health in the post-war world. This war, like the last one, has created many problems connected with public health and has also devised means to meet them with a considerable degree of success, as the medical organisations of the different army groups have shown. The aeroplane, in destroying distance, has rendered universal distribution of disease easy. The inevitable problems of post-war public health constitute a challenge to global plannings, inasmuch as "sanitary isolationism" has been proved impossible. Mr. Winslow believes that "we have an ideal opportunity for international co-operation. There are here no conflicting interests to be harmonised—only a universal common interest in a common task."

He is not the first to see the need. Raymond Fosdick, Director of the Rockefeller Foundation, called last October for a world health organisation. The challenge *is* global and the opportunity ideal.

# NEW BOOKS AND OLD

## THE SPIRIT OF REASON

Thomas Paine's *The Age of Reason* was first published complete on October 25th, 1795. Its first part had been issued a year before and was finished only six hours before its author was arrested in Paris under suspicion of disloyalty to the revolution. He wrote much of the second part during his confinement in the Luxembourg Prison when he was fortunate in escaping the guillotine and from which he issued broken in health, but not in spirit. Nothing could break the spirit of Thomas Paine, but the world of privilege and prejudice strove its hardest to hound him and his books out of existence, and it continued to do so long after he was dead. He had dealt that world mighty blows in the political and social fields before he turned to assail its tenderest and most sanctified preserve. Twenty years earlier his pamphlet *Common-Sense* and its sequel, *The American Crisis*, had heartened the American colonists to win their independence. And he had fought for them with a musket as well as a pen. In 1791 he took the field for a second Republic, when, then in England, he published *The Rights of Man*, challenging the reactionary legal arguments of Burke's *Reflections* and expounding the rights in nature and reason of revolution. For this, a year later, he had to flee to the France which he had championed, where he was elected a deputy to the Convention, only to be imprisoned in two years for showing under the Terror that courage of his humanity which to self-seeking men in every camp was treason to their own baseness.

He died, a lonely old man, in 1809. But, as Mr. H. N. Brailsford has written,

> His personal character stands written in his career....In a generation of brave men he was the boldest. He could rouse the passions of men, and he could brave them. If the Royalist Burke was eloquent for a queen, Republican Paine risked his life for a king. No wrong found him indifferent; and he used his pen not only for the democracy which might reward him, but for animals, slaves and women. Poverty never left him, yet he made fortunes with his pen, and gave them to the cause he served.

Those who have a taste for modern fiction-biography will find his tempestuous life realistically, if somewhat melodramatically, recreated in Mr. Howard Fast's recently published *Citizen Tom Paine*. Here I am concerned only with the book for which he suffered most.

"Paine," wrote William Blake, after reading Bishop Watson's answer to *The Age of Reason*, "has not attacked Christianity. Watson has defended Antichrist. It appears to me now that Tom Paine is a better Christian than the Bishop."

But the term Christian, in this general sense, is misleading. Paine, though bred a Quaker, was a Deist and it was as a champion of Deism, as he conceived it, that he assailed the Bible for which Bishop Watson wrote his lame *Apology*. It is, too, the passages in which he expounds this Deism in *The Age of Reason* which possess the most lasting value.

Actually he was less qualified for this assault on religious obscurantism than for his championing of human freedom in other fields and for his far-sighted enunciation of social reforms. He himself wrote, "The natural bent of my mind was to science. I had some turn, and I believe, some talent for poetry; but this I rather repressed than encouraged as leading, too much into the field of imagination."

Certainly any feeling for poetry or for the realm of inner mystery in which poetry has its source had died by the time he came to write *The Age of Reason*. Nor was he by temperament a speculative thinker. It was part of his simplicity and contributed to his unfailing self-assurance that he never felt the want of these faculties. He was perfectly satisfied, to quote his own words, "with the reason that God has given me; and I gratefully know he has given me a large share of that divine gift."

Our conception of "reason" today is not so confined or so confident as it was to the pioneers of the rationalistic revolution. We have learned painfully that rationalism can be as partial an expression of reason as the "revelation" against which it so scornfully strove, and that the reason, which comes at real truth and freedom, needs to be constantly quickened by that imagination which the rationalist is generally at such pains to repress. This faculty was almost entirely lacking in Paine's derisive assault upon the Christian scriptures, and for an adequate appraisal of the truth or falsity of any scripture, as of any poetry, it is essential. "I have now gone through the Bible," he boasted, "as a man would go through a wood with an axe on his shoulder, and fell trees. Here they lie; and the priests, if they can, may replant them. They may, perhaps, stick them in the ground, but they will never make them grow."

His axe in fact had not gone as near to the root of the trees as he supposed, though it lopped off many rotten branches. For his attack on the Bible and on Christian belief was as literal as the dogmatic orthodoxy he assailed. He fought it with its own weapons and had no difficulty in showing that as literal fact much of the Old and New Testaments was historically incredible and rationally grotesque. He did not spare his opponents' susceptibilities or mince his words. And the vilification and persecution which the book provoked, not only against its author, but for decades against any one who dared to print or sell it, is at least understandable. Crude caricature of things held sacred, however misguidedly from a rationalist stand-point, by millions of devout souls, was, to say the least, a fault of taste, and it inevitably provoked the very blind resistance to reasoned truth which he was concerned to remove.

Admittedly, he wrote not only in times that tried men's souls, as he had declared in a famous manifesto, but of state tyranny and church corruption. In Blake's forthright words, "The Beast and the Whore" ruled "without control." Credulity, too, was deep entrenched in sanctified convention. As Paine wrote, "People have been so long in the habit of reading the books called the Bible and Testament with their eyes shut and their sense locked up, that the most stupid inconsistencies have passed on them for truth, and imposition for prophecy." Yet, even allowing for the controversial vigour

of the day, it is doubtful whether vulgar ridicule was the best way to open their eyes. Harmless by comparison but no less revealing his lack of deeper insight into the Book he was tearing to pieces were the many passages in which he showed a really astonishing insensitiveness to the beauty and inner meaning not only of the story of Christ's life and death, but, for example, of the book of Ruth, one of the most perfectly-told tales in all literature, which he described as "an idle, bungling story foolishly told, nobody knows by whom, about a strolling country girl creeping slily to bed to her cousin Boaz" or of Isaiah whose "prophetic" writing he dismissed as "the continued incoherent, bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning; a schoolboy would scarcely have been excusable for writing such stuff."

This blindness to spiritual truth revealed through myth and image and story was due not only to the limitations of a rationalist outlook but to the restricted aim which he had set himself, which was to show that the Bible, far from being what the priests said it was, the literal "word of God" was, as fact, a tissue of falsehood and forgery. It was as fact he judged it and as fact his judgment was often unassailable. Indeed the "higher criticism," so called, has largely followed in his footsteps. Nor is his human indictment of the tribal barbarities described in the Old Testament any less valid today, when the God of the Old Testament still exercises a malignant influence over Western Christendom, than when he wrote, for example, "Could we permit ourselves to suppose that the Almighty would distinguish any nation of people by the name of his *chosen people*, we must suppose that people to have been an example to all the rest of the world of the purest piety and humanity, and not such a nation of ruffians and cutthroats as the ancient Jews were."

Paine as a philanthropic moralist had, of course, his blind spots, shown, for example, in his criticism of Christ's teaching about loving your enemies, or of Paul's about the resurrection in the spiritual body, which he wilfully distorts. He completely disregarded, too, the Messianic belief held by the Jews for centuries before Christ. Here again it was in imaginative vision that he was deficient, as his friend Blake came later to see. This lack affects, too, in some measure his noble presentation of the gospel of Deism. For the Biblical "Word of God" he substituted

> the Creation we behold; and it is in *this word*, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God speaketh universally to man....We can know God only through his works....The principles of Science lead to this knowledge, for the Creator of man is the Creator of science, and it is through that medium that man can see God, as it were, face to face.

It is difficult for us today, who have thrown off so much of the old religious superstitions and are inclined to accept, all too readily, some of the superstitions of modern "science," to realise how liberating such a gospel was to candid and courageous minds in Paine's day. Some of the best and most lucid passages in *The Age of Reason* are devoted to it, passages which support Madame Blavatsky's statement that "the silent worship of abstract or *noumenal* Nature, the only divine manifestation, is the one ennobling religion of Humanity." Yet this gospel of Science needs to

be comprehensive if it is not to impoverish the Soul of man. "The Almighty lecturer," as Paine characteristically called him, "by displaying the principles of science in the structure of the universe, has invited man to study and to imitation." But man himself is also a cosmos and needs to study the universe and the Creator within as well as without.

Of this Paine had little to say. He was sublimely and naïvely unconscious of himself. That was his strength and his weakness. In the knowledge of things to which language gives names there is a whole world of images revealing the creative laws of inner life as sensitively as the forms of nature display the outworking of that life in matter. This is the world of myth and symbol, of scripture and fable and poetry. A true gospel of science must embrace that too. To Paine it was almost a closed book. But in his day it had become so clogged and corrupted with dead forms and the interested literalism of those who were paid to expound that part of it enshrined in the Christian Bible, that to cut away this deadness was as necessary a task as to preach the principles of a new, fearless and reasonable life. Paine did both. His conviction that "the world has *walked in darkness* for eighteen hundred years, both as to religion and government, and it is only since the American revolution began that light has broken in," may seem ingenuous. But in recalling men to belief in "one God," whose attributes are revealed to us in "the scripture of creation" and in repudiating any claim by a Church or a Book to monopolise God, he struck a blow for truth and honesty, as brave as it was humane. Much of the destructive argument of *The Age of Reason* is only of historical interest today. But its spirit reaches out to that divine and integral science in which man will eventually find his freedom, reading and living Creation as his own eternal nature and the eternal nature of things guarantee.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

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*Poems of Our Time, 1900-1942.* Chosen by RICHARD CHURCH and M. M. BOZMAN. (Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., London. 3s.)

The period covered by this new anthology is perhaps one of a higher level of general achievement in thoughtful, sinewy, accomplished verse than any other in our literature: against this rich background of fine verse a few poems of high order glow like jewels in a rich setting, or jut, craggy and magnificent, from a pleasant fertile plain. The anthology is divided into four sections claiming to illustrate the time spirit and, incidentally, the development of individual poets: in great measure it succeeds, though I find in the last two, covering 1918 to 1942, little of the strong sociological trend of that period, and none of a characteristic feeling for the machine as a modern manifestation. Of that value for the machine Stephen Spender's "The Express" is a perfect example and might well have been included. This poet is, I think, poorly represented, only one of the three poems given being really typical and of first quality; but perhaps I am personally over-jealous for this particular writer's fame. The editors, Messrs. Richard Church and M. M.

Bozman, have in the main chosen well and cast their net wide: the one omission I could detect is Harold Munro who might have been accorded one short piece. But these criticisms are perhaps ungrateful: no anthology can be wholly satisfying unless it be of one's own choosing. Mr. Church and Mr. Bozman have given us a trim and workmanlike collection, containing many lovely and challenging things, which should bring pleasure and refreshment to thousands.

DOROTHY HEWLETT

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*A Preface to Prayer.* By GERALD HEARD. (Cassell and Co., Ltd., London. *7s. 6d.*)

In some of his books Mr. Heard has at times sounded a little like a skilled mechanic explaining a break-down in a car to a distracted motorist. But without any loss of technical precision, he has become more spiritually sensitive, and this study of the significance and the practice of prayer shows him at his best in bringing to an ancient and much expounded theme a new vision which restores to it its cardinal importance. Most modern men and women in the West have ceased to pray because prayer had so manifestly, in association with the Churches, become little more than a convention or, if it was more than this, an exclusively private business. On the other hand rationalism had seemed to prove that it was superfluous, if not actually useless. Mr. Heard sets out to show that it is not only of supreme value to the individual, indeed a necessity of his growth in Consciousness, but that it is also a supreme social service; that without it our thinking, however searchingly analytical, will deteriorate, as indeed it already so disastrously has, and both the individual and society will cease to evolve. This he most convincingly proves if we grant to prayer the universal yet precise meaning which he gives to it, drawing upon the evidence of the greatest masters of prayer and contemplation in East and West. His great virtue is to rescue the practice from all provincialisms of Church and Creed and to combine in his exposition traditional experience and contemporary knowledge. Following an accepted classification he distinguishes three stages of prayer, Low, Middle and High, which correspond to the three stages on the mystical path, Purgation, Proficiency, and Perfection (or Union). In each a "silence" is achieved, the silence, progressively, of the senses, the mind, and the will. In each a step in unification is achieved, that of the divided ego, that of the self going out in communion of love to others, and the final transcendent union of the self with its divine source. To each of these steps and stages Mr. Heard brings a really illuminating insight. He not only clarifies. He attracts the reader to undertake the task of spiritual evolution of which he defines the meaning and the method so cogently.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

*Srikanta: The Autobiography of a Wanderer.* By SARATCHANDRA CHATTERJEE. Translated from the original Bengali by KSHITISHCHANDRA SEN. (Indian Publishers, Benares. Rs. 3/14)

This is the first volume in "India Library," a series which will seek to promote better understanding and cultural co-operation between India's linguistic groups and will present the best of Indian literature to foreign readers. The "Library" will comprise both translations and original English works. Other volumes in preparation include *Indian Short Stories: An Anthology, The Wish-cow* by Premchand, *Name of Woman* by Siyaramsaran Gupta, *The Resignation* by Jainendrakumar and *A House Afire* by Saratchandra Chatterjee. The publisher has set himself a high ideal, and deserves all support in his brave venture.

*Srikanta* is one of Saratchandra's peak achievements. It represents also his most characteristic writing. The original work runs into four parts, of which only the first now appears in translation. (Incidentally, this part has been translated before, in English and French, but in a slipshod manner, and a new, more satisfying English version is welcome.) Srikanta, who lends his name to the story, is the narrator of some of his vital life-experiences. His own personality, however, has been over-shadowed by the brush of his narration, and he seems no more than a peg on which is hung a tapestried view of life. "In all his [Saratchandra's] work the women stand out," the translator tells us in his excellent Introduction. The two women in the present story, Annada and Rajlakshmi, are among the author's half-dozen immortal creations. It may be noted that the women who rustle, calm-faced, through his pages are of the earth, earthy. They are built with the clay of everydayness. Comely, often, and with tender eyes and ascetic lips. Then crisis smites them like sudden lightning, and instantly these creatures are, as it were, stripped of their outer selves, revealing deep spiritual qualities, a supreme enrichment that is the heritage (so Saratchandra believes) of every woman. This, indeed, is the framework of Saratchandra's ideology, and the set pattern of his creative endeavour. Within its restricted range it has room enough for new combinations; the pieces in the great kaleidoscope shift continually, so that each new pattern wears the look of a marvellous innovation.

The foreign reader will perhaps consider the work extremely sketchy, a charcoal drawing with little significant detail. A great deal is left to the reader's imagination. One is reminded of the technique of certain novels by Knut Hamsun, though the two great writers have no real resemblance to each other save in their capacity to invest the outwardly commonplace with inner values and richness.

The rendering in English has been done with competence and ease. Once in a while it touches the fringe of beauty. I am glad to echo the wistful hope of the translator that "it will bring the foreign reader closer to Indian life and the Indian reader closer to the life of Bengal."

BHABANI BHATTACHARYA

*The Long Pursuit.* Selected Essays 1941-1944. By DALLAS KENMARE. (Burrow's Press, Cheltenham, England. 4*s.* 6*d.*)

Miss Kenmare's little book is a collection of essays on poetry. The "long pursuit" is the pursuit of perfection from which the poet derives his creative power.

The longest and most important essay in the book is on "Rilke: Poet of the New Age." Not until Rilke's passionate belief in the divine significance of art is accepted, says Miss Kenmare, can there be hope of a permanent recovery "from the ills which have been creeping like fungus over civilization since the advent of the machine age." For never has there been a graver need for a renaissance, a new understanding of the true significance of art, its essentially religious basis, and the part it can play in the reintegration of a ruined world, than at the present time. But this renaissance cannot come about until art takes itself seriously and until individual artists affirm the reality of their unique vocation. In her view, poets, who have an intuitive grasp of the complexities of every human problem, are much better social reformers than politicians, whose formulations are usually unacceptable to poets simply because they are based on political expediency, which has its roots in time rather than eternity. The fundamental fact which the social reformer ignores is the metaphysical fact of individual isolation. For the planners of a future based on "social security" this fact, the realization of which is the source of all the greatest art, is most unwelcome. Even Marx, who sought spiritual renewal (though he would not have called it that) each year by reading the works of Æschylus and Shakespeare, recognised that poets were a "special kind of beings" and should be left alone, though his followers have done their best to forget this. And Lenin feared to listen to Beethoven, admitting that there "was nothing greater"—for Beethoven, more than any other artist, has explored the essential loneliness of the human spirit to its furthest limits in art. The vicious perversions of this spirit which we have witnessed in our own time spring to a larger extent than is generally realised from attempts to regiment it into rigid social and political moulds. This is, indeed, the crucifixion of modern man, which produces war and all manner of abominable cruelty.

Poetry is an expression of the freedom of the human spirit and, as such, is at war with the social man of the politicians. For "Peace and war lie in the heart," Miss Kenmare quotes D. H. Lawrence as saying in a letter written in 1916 during the last war. "Nations are external material facts. The reality of peace, the reality of war, lies in the hearts of the people; you, me, all the rest... *To be material at this juncture is hopeless, hopeless—and worse than impractical.* Only the living heart and the creative spirit matter—nothing else."

PHILIP HENDERSON

# CORRESPONDENCE

## DR. AMBEDKAR'S DREAM

### ANNIHILATION OF HINDU CULTURE

Mr. Beverley Nichols has certified that the Hon. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is one of the half dozen most brilliant brains in India. In spite of the source of this commendation, it is well known that Dr. Ambedkar has one of the best-stocked private libraries in the country, has shown himself a keen student of economics, has been Principal of a Government Law College, has made his name famous by his pact with Mahatma Gandhi and is a leader of no small stature. But the dream which he has dreamt and has shared with the public is a foretaste of Bolshevism, being destructive of the Hindu Culture, apart from its doubtful logic, permissible in a dream.

The basis of Hindu Culture is a hierarchic structure of society. Even the religion of the Hindus is based on that principle. In the governance of the universe as in that of the affairs of men there is hierarchy. The Hindu culture thus favours intellectuals and not the majority. Those are best fitted to rule who have the equipment for it. Good government may not be a substitute for self-government, but the latter can be oppressive, destructive and ruinous.

Dr. Ambedkar affirms that the Hindus are not a political majority, but does not define his meaning. The very name is indicative of its religious significance. The Mahomedans, or, for the matter of that, even the backward classes, which the learned Doctor champions, are also not a political majority; they are not even a religious majority. The backward classes, moreover, are part and parcel of the Hindu religious group. If they are, owing to bad custom, unjustly treated, socially, economically and politically, it is a matter between them and the other Hindus. Men belonging to those castes or classes can and do rise above their surroundings and circumstances to join the higher ranks of the Hindu social structure, as in the shining example of Dr. Ambedkar himself. If such cases are rare the remedy does not lie in destroying Hindu Culture by giving political power into the hands of the intellectually backward classes or men, or of the minority in a nation, but so arranging the political institutions of a country as to make them representative of the various parts of the body politic, the *Virat Purusha* of the Hindu conception.

Dr. Ambedkar's diagnosis of the trend of Indian politics is apt. He says, " Whenever a community grows powerful and demands certain political advantages, concessions are made to win its good-will." There is, he emphasises, " no judicial examination of its claims; no judgment of merits." He further observes, " The result is that there are no limits to concessions." Nothing can be more absurd than this policy of eternal appeasement. One wonders if the learned Doctor had Chamberlain and Hitler in mind!

But what is the criterion of a

community's having become powerful? When and how does it become so? On account of betterment in the economic condition of its components? By intellectual advancement? By vociferations of leaders? By increase in its population proportionately to other communities? By divisions, as under the communal award? The learned Doctor seems to have had the last circumstance in mind when he wrote "The Hindu majority is a communal majority and not a political majority."

From his proposals for giving seats in the legislatures he has made it clear that (1) he would give such representation not in any relation to population strength and (2) he would give representation to a community irrespective of whether it had men capable of representing them. According to Dr. Ambedkar, whether this is so or not, the number of members should be there. They may not be able to understand the proceedings or to form an opinion; they may be able only to vote like machines at the bidding of their leader. Does this not carry party machinery too far? Apart from that, it would mean either mob rule or dictatorship.

Dr. Ambedkar has said "The attempts at solution of the problem so far were either in the nature of a coward's plan to kowtow to the bully or of a bully's plan to dictate to the weak." But his plan plainly favours the latter course. Because the Hindu community is more advanced, especially intellectually, owing to the Hindu Culture, it is to be placed on an equality with less advanced communities. This is in effect what the learned Doctor proposes. Hindus, who, excluding the scheduled castes, are at least 21 crores, are to have only 40%; Musalmans, who at the maximum are 9 crores, the same percentage; while the scheduled castes who are about 7 crores are to get 20% of the representation in the Central Legislature.

The sheet-anchor of Hindu Culture is intellect. It favours neither castes nor the numerical majority. The Assembly under the King consisted of the heads of guilds. For political purposes guilds were the constituencies for legislative, or executive, bodies from the village Panchayats upwards. There was no question of majority or minority on any other basis than merit. It was the merit of the question or the topic that was considered.

While Dr. Ambedkar condemns majority rule in the following strong terms "The majority rule was untenable in theory and unjustifiable in practice," he favours the majority of individuals, whether fitted or not to discharge their functions in the communities *inter se*. Party majority is another thing but the party has to be a political party and not a communal one, if the legislature, or the executive, is to function beneficially.

For the maintenance of Hindu culture, which has moulded the lives of the inhabitants of India, irrespective of caste or colour or religion, not a numerical majority in politics is needed but an intellectual majority.

On the other hand in principle Dr. Ambedkar does not oppose a numerical majority. His following observations make this clear. He says, "a majority community might be conceded a relative majority of representation but it could never claim an absolute majority." Further, "The abandonment of the principle of majority rule in politics

could not affect the Hindus very much; in other walks of life they would remain a majority." Here he concedes the strength of their culture, but if the governance of the country is given into the hands of anti-Hindu cultures, will the Hindus remain a majority even in the spheres named by Dr. Ambedkar?

While a nation like the French is fighting for the maintenance of its implanted culture in foreign countries, where is the logic in saying, as Dr. Ambedkar does, "My proposals do not ask the Hindus to abandon the principle of majority rule. All I am asking them is to be satisfied with a relative majority"? Where is this counsel of moderation, perfection or provocation followed? Indeed, he favours the majority of the ignorant or blind followers.

The Sapru Committee supports, although but partially, the principle of functional representation. But it could not free itself from the glamour of democracy, which in its prime is nothing but planning, control and dictatorship. The Sapru Committee also pays tribute to the Hindu Culture by proposing that the head of the Indian Government elected for five years shall always be an Indian Prince. Although the idea has not been fully developed in all its ramifications, it recognises the mainspring of the Hindu Culture.

There is a difference between the Hindu religion and Hindu culture, although both are tolerant. Nothing should be done to impair, much less to destroy Hindu Culture. The Hindu religion is necessarily communal, but not so Hindu Culture. If it is rendered a thing of the past, India will remain a geographical expression or may not remain so. The continent has common traditions, deeds, glories of ancestors, ways of living and common thoughts. Every nationality that has settled in India has become subject to Hindu Culture.

M. V. KIBE

*Indore.*

## "INDIA AND BRITAIN"

Miss Cross's article on "India and Britain" in the June number of THE ARYAN PATH is a challenge to all serious-minded men and women of our country. The arguments of the well-meaning authoress cannot be met by hedging or by pointing out the existence of analogous conditions in the West. I wish to face them boldly, admit faults where they exist and suggest remedies where they may be effective. This article is an expression of the reaction evoked by the irritants applied to an Indian mind by the deft fingers of an impartial critic.

Many of the observations made by Miss Cross are the result of the viewpoint developed by a ruling nation not in vital contact with the people it governs. Second-hand reports, hearsay, superficial observations of hustling tourists and irresponsible treatises by interested parties are responsible for the mistaken notions about India—entertained by the average English citizen. But there is a certain basic foundation which supports all these false views, and this foundation is laid in brute fact.

The first of these is CASTE. Caste is a curse laid on our unfortunate country. Let us not camouflage it by comparing it with the "class" system in the West. Caste is definitely *not* class. Caste is

something horrid, inhuman, cruel and *dangerous* to human existence. If it is not destroyed soon, it will destroy human civilisation, nay, it will destroy man himself. If you are born into the Sudra Caste, you are a Sudra as long as you live. You may reach the highest position intellectually and morally, you may make the greatest sacrifices, you may do anything in your power to prove your worth and merit, still you will be a Sudra. Oftentimes your caste will stick to you even when you change your religion and go over to the Christian fold! Such is the tenacity of the hold of caste. And one's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are all branded by the same caste stigma. Each caste oppresses the one below it, and all band together in oppressing the Untouchables. Of late there has been some awakening of public conscience in this respect. But the improvement is not at all commensurate with the extravagant claims made by our leaders. A small beginning may be made along the following lines:

1. All caste names and caste suffixes should be dropped. Nothing that may suggest one's caste should form any part of one's name. This applies only to men, for women do not have caste names!

2. Segregation of caste should cease in the villages. No street or mohalla and no specified area should be set apart for any caste.

3. Inter-caste marriages should be encouraged by political leaders.

The Untouchables are a challenge to all of us. The many recent reforms, including the temple-entry reform have done a great deal for them. But they should cease to exist as Untouchables. They should be absorbed into the main body of Hindu society. And this can be achieved only by free intermarriage.

The gulf between the "educated" and the peasants is a real gulf. All critics, including the well-meaning Western critics, have laid the whole blame for the gulf at the door of the "educated" class. They have failed to see the spectre hiding behind the scenes and fooling all of them, including the critic. How could they see it? It requires a psycho-analyst to tear off the protecting veil!

The "educated" men and women have come into contact with the most refined cultures of the world, and in the process of educating themselves they have been refining their minds to a dangerous point of nicety. They are not aware of it. They look round and find unspeakable vulgarity in the conversation, behaviour and life-movements of the people round about. They find it in their own homes, for instance, in the abominably *vulgar* way in which "uneducated" women fondle their children of the opposite sex. They make courageous attempts at reform, but get snubbed or ridiculed. Their refined minds cannot suffer this humiliation. The educated men and women become introverts, withdraw into themselves and live in a world of their own. The resistance and regression which they develop are unconscious. What might have been a dynamic force for the regeneration of our country is turned back on itself and made to consume itself. The remedy? Devulgarisation of the villager. How? Let the leaders answer the question.

P. S. NAIDU

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[Space does not permit detailed

analysis of the difference between caste as originally conceived and as it exists today. Caste as a qualitative classification by natural disposition and stage of human evolution is one thing. The rigidity and the injustice of a hereditary caste system is quite another and has been well called an anachronism. Recognise as a Brahmin him alone who shows forth the spiritual qualities which the true Brahmin exemplifies, not him who is born of Brahmin parents, and similarly for the rest, and the objections to caste fall to the ground along with all the offences against brotherhood committed in its name.

The vulgarity with which our villagers stand charged by Professor Naidu is not peculiar to India. There is a certain uncouthness in many of the children of the soil that jars upon the city-dweller everywhere. The latter's contempt is traceable, for instance, in the degradation of the word "villain," which meant originally "a serf attached to a farm." But our correspondent is, we feel, too hard upon our uneducated folk. In some of these expressions of vulgarity there is a certain naïveté—rooted in innocence. Take the very instance which Professor Naidu cites—the extravagant fondling of little children by uneducated women. Little children of both sexes, be it noted, however much the fact may conflict with psycho-analytic theory! They do it quite openly because in their own minds there is no idea of impropriety or evil in connection with such demonstrativeness. There is no doubt a physical substratum to mother-love, but how much there is besides! We wonder whether the psycho-analysts have not done more harm than good by emphasizing this aspect of the purest as the most unselfish of human affections. The colour and the fragrance of the rose are the offspring of the sun, the air and the rain, as much as of the sometimes unpleasantly manured soil in which the plant is rooted. "Why try to focus our attention on the latter?" we are justified in asking.

It is more rare, no doubt, for educated women to indulge in such demonstrations, publicly at least. When they do so they knowingly offend against the code of "proper" conduct; when they accept that code without conviction and abstain, in deference to it, from some of these "vulgarities," the subtle poison of hypocrisy seeps in.

But certainly not all of the uneducated are vulgarians! In India especially many of the illiterate villagers have an innate culture which gives them a natural refinement. We find expressions of it side by side with the vulgarities. We should be careful not to generalise or to overlook one aspect in emphasizing another.—ED.]

# ENDS AND SAYINGS

*" _____ ends of verse*
*And sayings of philosophers."*
HUDIBRAS

From the 20th to the 22nd of this month the All-India Writers' Conference sponsored by the P. E. N. All-India Centre will be meeting at Jaipur. Distinguished writers from abroad are expected, including Mr. Hermon Ould, the International Secretary of the P. E. N. Association of leading writers and editors, and Mr. E. M. Forster from England, as well as, it is hoped, representatives of China, France and the U. S. A. There are to be distinguished speakers besides the National P. E. N. President, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, and Sir Mirza Ismail, Prime Minister of Jaipur, who will give the Inaugural Address. To name but a few: Sir S. Radhakrishnan will speak on "Moral Values in Literature," Sir Maurice Gwyer will introduce the discussion on "The Desirability of Revising the Indian Copyright Law and Making it Uniform throughout India," Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji will give an address on "The Ancient Indian Literatures and the Evolution of Newer Forms," and Dean N. K. Sidhanta is taking part in the Symposium on the Modern Indian Literatures, speaking on the development of English literature in India during the last fifty years.

Especially gratifying, however, from the stand-point of national cultural unity is the enthusiasm with which writers from every part of India are rallying to the P.E.N.'s call to mutual friendliness and fellow-feeling among the makers of the written word, in whatever language they couch their thought.

The P. E. N. puts simple human friendliness on one side of the balance and on the other all the world distinctions of wealth and social status, of age and sex, of views political or social, of nation, race, or creed, and finds that friendliness outweighs them all. It recognises no criterion of eligibility except one—that of standing as a writer—and no body of craftsmen could demand less of candidates to membership than the ability to wield effectively their chosen tools.

The All-India Writers' Conference at Jaipur is an effort, on a smaller scale but following the pattern of the International Congresses of the P. E. N., held annually in times of peace, to facilitate the mutual acquaintanceships among scattered writers that may ripen into friendships, and the strengthening of loyalty to P. E. N. ideals.

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The high rate of infant mortality in India continues to cause acute anxiety to all her well-wishers. It is a result of abysmal ignorance of the laws of hygiene and dietetics on the one hand, and of pinching poverty on the other, combined with a lamentable lack of adequate provision for medical and maternity relief by the State and social organisations. This painful fact is brought home once again in "Health of Gujarati Children at Birth (Analysis of the New-born for the Years 1928-1942)," contributed by Dr. Chamanlal

M. Mehta and Dr. D. D. Vora to the *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society*, Science Number, recently received. Out of the 24,655 babies born in the Bombay maternity hospitals admitting Gujarati Hindu women, there were 17.36 still-births per 1,000 births, and 35.1 deaths of infants during the first ten days after birth out of every 1,000 live births. While these compare favourably with the figures for the children of all communities born during the same period, published by the Health Officer of the Bombay Municipality, the corresponding figures being 66.96 and 68.62, respectively, they are yet a sad reflection on existing conditions. Birth weight figures in this study are definitely below the average weight calculated for a new-born Hindu baby in another smaller-scale investigation covering several parts of the country. The steadily deteriorating trend during the period is particularly disquieting. Deficiency in the mother's diet and lack of exercise are suggested as causal factors. "Economic deterioration of an average middle class Gujarati family" and war hardships must share the responsibility for the former, but the writers suggest also a trend to increased spending on luxury articles and cinemas and "the craze for reducing the diet in order to remain slim,"—weaknesses which can be and must be checked.

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There are many scattered individuals throughout the world who see in union the one hope of our time. The bringing of the isolated sparks together in a flame is very necessary. One movement which holds great promise if it spreads sufficiently far and fast is Cultural Union, launched at King's College, London, a few months ago, with Prof. Denis Saurat, Director of the Institut Français du Royaume Uni, in the chair.

Recognising that "the deep reasons of conflicts are always moral, intellectual, and spiritual," Cultural Union takes the sound position that political action is useless without mutual understanding, at least among the educated in all countries, the natural leaders of the masses who sooner or later conform to the pattern that they set.

Leaving the former enemy nations out of account for the moment—though it is wisely recognised that they too must be integrated—there is no denying that gulfs exist between the Atlantic Powers, the U. S. S. R., the Islamic world and the Hindu and the Chinese zones—gulfs from which new problems fatal to world peace threaten at any moment to arise.

Cultural Union aims at bridging these rifts by dispelling ignorance, not by imposing the Western cultural pattern upon other civilisations. It recognises that in many things the West has more to learn from other countries than to teach them. Not uniformity but understanding is the goal. The words of the Hindu sage come to mind in this connection :—

> One must study to know, know to understand, understand to judge.

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It is an ancient adage in India that study is fulfilled through service. It is, therefore, but proper that youth, while still at school and college, should be afforded opportunities for learning the art of living, of discharging, in other words, their obligations to their fellowmen in the various walks of life. To treat them as hothouse plants only

arrests their growth, as it robs them of their continual contact with the community in which they will be called upon, before long, to function. As J. F. Wolfenden rightly points out in "Youth and the Community," in *Britain To-day* for August 1945:—

> It is a mistake to separate young people from the life of the whole community of which they are a part, to treat the years of adolescence as a period which can be cut out of the life of an individual or of the community and treated in isolation from the years which come before and after. Those years are part—a crucially important part—of an organic growth. And if they are properly spent we have the chance of bringing into being what neither this country nor any other has yet experienced, an intelligent, responsible and happy democracy.

Only if the community or the state finds ways and means for canalising the leisure and the legitimate diversity of interests and enthusiasms of youth in proper channels will the foundations of democracy be forthwith well and truly laid.

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Under the title "A Design for Fighting," Dr. Harlow Shapley, Director of the Harvard Observatory since 1921, offers us in the August *Atlantic Monthly* foes worthier of our steel than are the bodies of our fellow-men. The direct achievements of war—the "boastful pacification of a restless island," the "capture of a distant market for the enriching of a few traders," "gloating superiority in armoured flying battleships"—he rightly sees as "goals unsuited to human dignity in this time of a New Renaissance." He concedes the material advantages of war to a winning nation remote from the battle area, in universal employment and widely distributed prosperity, but sees an unanswerable argument against "man-kill-man war" in its essential immorality.

He offers instead real enemies, a concerted attack on which would change the face of civilisation: upon illiteracy (How small a problem in the U.S.A. compared with ours in India!); upon premature senility, through research directed against diseases, physical and mental; against the threat of a drab cultural uniformity, by developing and maintaining local customs; and upon "the tyranny of the unknown." He wants the widest possible participation in the attempt to widen the luminous zone of knowledge of our world and calls for the listing of the immediate unsolved problems in each field of physical and social science. A good start towards expanding knowledge! Asking the right questions of Nature is a long step towards getting the right replies, but the co-ordination of results is today an even greater need.

The compartmentalising of science has been carried too far. There must of course be specialisation on research problems but, without the pooling of results, valuable clues to specialised research are missed. And, more important still, the fundamental unity of life and of the evolutionary pattern. It is not the piling up of isolated facts that can ever conquer the "tyranny of the unknown," but a philosophy of science broad enough to hold all facts already known as well as everything that can conceivably be known. Before we build the house we need a plan. In this case what is needed is not to evolve a pattern but to find the Plan.

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